

DESERT MODELER

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In 2020, AZ Division

had a banner year, as far as the AP program was concerned. Four individuals earned 2 Golden Spikes, 11 AP certificates and 1 MMR, with more coming in 2021.

John Lovely earned:
Structures
MMR #662

Paul Buhrke earned:
Golden Spike
Chief Dispatcher
Civil Engineer
Electrical Engineer
Scenery

Bob Ginger earned:
Golden Spike
Author
Scenery
Structures
Electrical Engineer
Chief Dispatcher

Frank Baker earned:
Association Official

We are on track to add three more MMRs to the division in 2021. All of the folks above are very close to completing their MMR.

Congratulations are due all these folks. The culmination of lots of work!

Getting help

In these times, personal interaction is diminished, but it is so important in the AP program. We must take matters into our own hands, rather than having things just happen naturally.

Zoom meetings have shrunk the world. Some Saturdays, I've attended the Lone Star Region Division 1 (Fort Worth ad west) monthly meeting in the morning and the San Diego Division monthly meeting in the afternoon. It is nice to see what folks are doing these days. The LSR Division 1 meetings are archived on their YouTube channel (<https://tinyurl.com/y4ghw2bz>) and the San Diego meetings are on their channel (<https://tinyurl.com/y6oqx3ho>).

Frank Baker led many of us through building a laser kit on four Saturdays in October and November on Zoom. Some really nice work was turned out. Hopefully some of the participants will move on within the AP program. When we next have an in-person meet, I'm hoping to see some of the finished structures.

We have done remote evaluations for the AP program for the certificates where it is sanctioned (Scenery, Prototype Models, the Engineer group) using a combination of Zoom video conferencing and still photos eMailed to the evaluators ahead of time. Cars, Motive Power, Structures are not sanctioned for remote evaluations as a general rule. And there are the "paperwork" certificates that are just submissions: Chief Dispatcher, Author, Volunteer & Official.

I've become friends with many folks around the world

The “Ah-ha” moment

Many MMRs report that the program clicked with them when suddenly they realized:

“Good enough” isn’t.

Seems simple, but the best modelers repair or replace or do-over as necessary to make the best possible models they can.

After a while, you learn that doing things well doesn’t always take a lot more time and the satisfaction is a wonderful feeling.

Getting the best score

You do the work. Don’t you want to get as many points as you deserve when you are evaluated?

Within the confines of the “ah-ha” moment, there *are* the practical issues. For example, the photo below might be a bit “over the top.”

Maximizing SCRATCH BUILT points!



through these Zoom encounters. Lots of fun.

The NMRAX program, a brain child of Gordy Robinson, has brought HOURS of clinics and layout tours to our armchairs. The volunteers are adding many hours per month to the NMRAX library. The videos are archived on YouTube (<https://tinyurl.com/ydd597oh>). The clinics get streamed live on that channel in multi-hour blocks. Later, they are split down into their hour long segments and reposted. We are very lucky to have this going for us. It is a great recruiting tool these days, too. Remember, this is a way to earn points toward Volunteer and Author without leaving your home - just do a clinic.

The traditional communication devices, such as **eMail** and **phone** continue to work these days. Reach out. You’ll find folks who want to help.

For one-on-one discussions, **FaceTime** and **Skype** are useful.

DCC Clinic 2/13

I mentioned the LSR Division 1 above. On February 13, I’m doing a clinic for their monthly meeting about DCC. I’m going to present a short talk on boosters and then open it up for questions about DCC. The meeting will start at 9 AM MST, with the clinic probably beginning about 10 to 10:30 AM MST. eMail me if you would like to attend and I’ll send you the link when it comes out a few days ahead of the meeting. Of course you can always watch the archive later. But you will miss out on the Q&A time.

The ballots are out!

This year there are some choices in the administration of the NMRA. It is forbidden to use any NMRA vehicle to campaign for any specific candidate. So, all that I can say here is: read the candidates and think seriously before you vote. There are some significant choices.